

Dear friends,

We are here together in our support of AdkAction because we believe that what's good in the world exists right here in the Adirondacks. Where else do 100 towns and villages nestle against mountains, wrap around rivers, tuck against dense forests?

Unfortunately, not everyone gets an equitable opportunity to enjoy the Adirondack Park. Income inequality, lack of broadband access, the housing crisis, and food insecurity are commonplace in the region and impact year round residents the most. These issues also make it difficult for new families to move here, weakening the potential of our communities. AdkAction strives to advance economic and environmental justice in the region by taking on big issues like these through tangible projects. You will have the opportunity to read about the progress we made over twelve months in these pages, and we think you'll agree that AdkAction continues to have an out-sized impact.

As many of you know, I have made the decision to step aside to make space for a new leader to champion our shared vision. I want to thank you all for your support, collaboration, and friendship over the past 6 years. It is truly an honor to pass the torch to Sawyer Cresap, AdkAction's incoming Executive Director. It's rare to find someone who so gracefully balances intellect, empathy, and an appetite for action. It is deeply satisfying to know that the organization I have worked so hard to help build, as its first full time Director, is in such capable hands. I hope you will all join me in supporting Sawyer's leadership by sending her a welcome email, making a membership contribution in her honor, or signing up to volunteer in 2022.

Thank you, truly, for the opportunity to lead AdkAction and advance our shared vision.

S. Christenson

Brittany Christenson AdkAction Executive Director 2016-2021





Dear AdkAction community,

I am honored to be leading AdkAction as its next Executive Director, a unique organization with such strong momentum around meeting unmet needs through innovative, interconnected projects.

Some of you may know me as an advocate for Adirondack communities in Hamilton County and other, more remote towns across the Park. In Indian Lake, I helped lead a community development effort designed to navigate many of the same issues AdkAction has spotlighted as pervasive across the Park. I've seen first-hand what makes these challenges complex, and hope to bring a similar sense of respect and humility while working to solve them. Together, we have the opportunity to make life better for people and nature here.

These are big shoes to fill. In her six-year tenure as Executive Director, Brittany was instrumental in taking AdkAction to a new level by developing creative projects, increasing measurable impacts, expanding membership, developing new partners and grants, and dramatically increasing the visibility and reputation of AdkAction. Anyone who met Brittany was greeted by her compassion, drive, thoughtful farsight, and deep knowledge. I know I was. It is with huge gratitude that the team and I wish her the best in her new career.

I look forward to building on this continued success together, joining the talented staff and board of directors devoted to our mission, and meeting the many AdkAction supporters who bring our organization to life. This is an exceptional coalition. Let's continue striving for the vibrancy, sustainability, collaboration, and passion AdkAction was founded on, and see what new terrain we can explore together.

Sawver Cresap

AdkAction Executive Director

2 0 2 1 **T e a m**

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Tom Boothe ADIRONDACK INTERNSHIP

The Tom Boothe Adirondack Internship Program was created by AdkAction to honor the legacy of past Board Chair Tom Boothe, who passed away unexpectedly in October 2020. Tom was known for introducing friends from around the world to the immense natural beauty of the Adirondack Park, and was particularly motivated to engage young people in the work of making a positive impact on our region's communities.

Kim Gonzalez, an Environmental Science major at SUNY Binghamton, became our first Tom Boothe Adirondack Intern for ten weeks in Summer 2021. During her time with AdkAction, Kim planned and built a community garden in Keeseville, organized cooking classes for our Farmacy project, conducted community outreach for Fair Food Pricing, and represented AdkAction at farmers markets and other area events.

The paid internship was designed to allow enough flexibility and time to truly experience and enjoy summer in the Adirondacks, and Kim took full advantage of the opportunity. She became a regular at local swimming holes, hiked many a high peak, and deeply connected to the local farming movement.

"The Tom Boothe Adirondack Internship was a dream internship experience come true. I was able to propose my own project dealing with food insecurity and implement it with the support of the entire AdkAction team, along with community stakeholders," said Kim. "Having the opportunity to live in the Adirondacks for the summer season also allowed me to be one stop from any trailhead, water body and other scenic areas for a fun-filled adventure. I made lifelong friends in the region. I cannot express my gratitude enough to the amazing professional and individual experience that this internship afforded."

















Food Security Projects



At the onset of COVID-19, in March 2020, we launched the Emergency Food Package project, which delivered over 64,000 meals, sourced from local farmers and prepared by furloughed food workers. In 2021 we transitioned into a Fair Food Pricing project, supported by foundations and individual community donors, to subsidize the cost of local foods by 30-90% for both low and middle-income participants, while still funneling 100% of the funds directly to farmers.

More than 200 North Country households enrolled in Fair Food Pricing this first pilot year. We provided over \$40,000 in food subsidies, amounting to a purchasing power greater than \$130,000 in support of our local food system.

"Thank you very much for this program and your work. I am coming out of, honestly, several years of often-severe food insecurity and it is such a help to be able to get good, healthy food cheaply."

- Jane, October 2021



AdkAction supported the Saranac Lake and Lake Placid Farmers Markets to accept SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits, leveraging the largest federal food program aimed at combatting food insecurity. We also assisted in bringing the Field & Fork Network's Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB) program to the markets, and welcomed a DUFB AmeriCorps VISTA, Jennifer Stanton, to serve with AdkAction for a full year.



We funded and helped create a software platform to allow ordering fresh farm food online using SNAP benefit cards, which previously was available only through a few grocery chains. We received a grant to begin testing an innovative "personal subsidy card" with our Fair Food shoppers. Similar to SNAP/EBT, this card can be topped up regularly by private organizations, such as AdkAction, churches, non-profits or families. AdkAction FFP Cards can be used at the Hub on the Hill, farms, farmers markets, and "Farmacy" locations.

Our Farmacy project, which began with the Keeseville Pharmacy in 2017, has now expanded to three sites, increasing food access in rural food deserts. Mountain Weavers Farm Store in Port Henry, launched in 2019 with AdkAction support, is now operating independently. A Farmacy at Cornerstone Drug in Rouses Point opened in 2021. AdkAction supports these partners in accepting food access tools, such as SNAP, DUFB, and our Fair Food Program, to make local healthy foods more affordable and accessible.

In 2021, we introduced a Fair Share program, to make Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm shares accessible to families who typically could not afford the required lump-sum payment ahead of the growing season. We partnered with White Rainbow Regenerative Yoga Farm (Peru) and Tangleroot Farm (Essex), providing 23 families with a free farm share for 20 weeks. We have already raised private funding to expand this to more than 100 families in 2022.

"For over a decade, we had looked at different CSA shares in the community every growing season and wished we could buy into one, but the large up-front cost and inability to use SNAP benefits to pay prevented us from doing so. We would rather eat local and have our food dollars support local farms. This program is important... for the families, the farms and the community as a whole.... This program and its goals deeply matter. Thank you so very much."

Fair Share participant,
 December 2021

AdkAction hosted two cooking classes at the Keeseville Pharmacy to teach techniques for creating meals from local CSA farm shares. Classes were open to the public via virtual viewing with a limited number of spaces for in-person participation. Both in-person and online attendees were able to ask questions regarding meal planning, what to do with an unknown locally grown vegetable, and other cooking questions.

With funding from the Cloudsplitter Foundation and New York Health Foundation, we hired a full-time staff member in May 2021 to manage our growing portfolio of Food Security projects.







In February 2021, AdkAction received a \$49,961 grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program to fund its "Clean Water, Safe Roads Partnership: Phase 1" project. This project builds on over ten years of collaboration between AdkAction, Paul Smith's College Adirondack Watershed Institute, the Lake Champlain Sea Grant, and other partners to understand the impacts of road salt on human and natural systems in northern New York.

The "Clean Water, Safe Roads Partnership" is a multifaceted education and outreach effort to recruit several audiences to participate in road salt reduction efforts.

Phase I will include outreach to municipalities in the Lake Champlain Basin in New York State. Municipalities who participate in the program will receive water quality reports and technical assistance to develop personalized road salt reduction plans for their respective towns and villages. The overarching goal of the project is to reduce the use of road salt in the region and support the efforts of municipalities to implement proven winter road maintenance best practices.



After the successful completion of Phase 1, funding will be requested for the additional phases of the project. Phase 2 will be focused on commercial salt applicators and businesses, and Phase 3 will focus on educating homeowners and renters, as well as the driving public.

In December 2021, the Randy Preston Road Salt Reduction Task Force was appointed and is expected to submit recommendations in 2022 to reduce road salt application throughout the Adirondacks. One of the major goals of the Randy Preston Road Salt Reduction Act is a three-year Adirondack Park-wide pilot program that will implement data driven road salt reduction tactics all while maintaining safe roads for drivers. This pilot program will work to reduce road salt pollution into our lakes, streams, and, most importantly, our drinking water.





Community Revitalization through the Arts

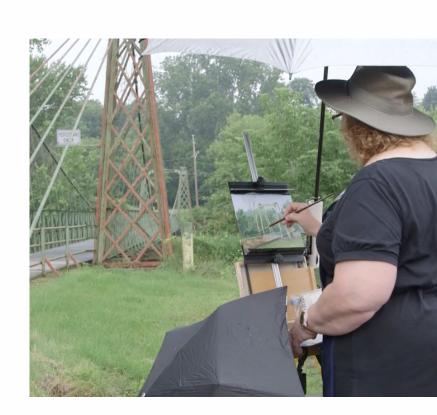
In 2021, AdkAction supported the Adirondack Plein Air Festival as a sponsor, co-hosted the Tupper Lake Plein Air Festival, and our Keeseville Plein Air Festival evolved into a full-fledged community-wide celebration of the arts. The new, expanded Keeseville Community Arts Festival included our longstanding plein air art show and sale, as well as youth art activities, a community mural project, live art demonstrations, live music and theater performances.

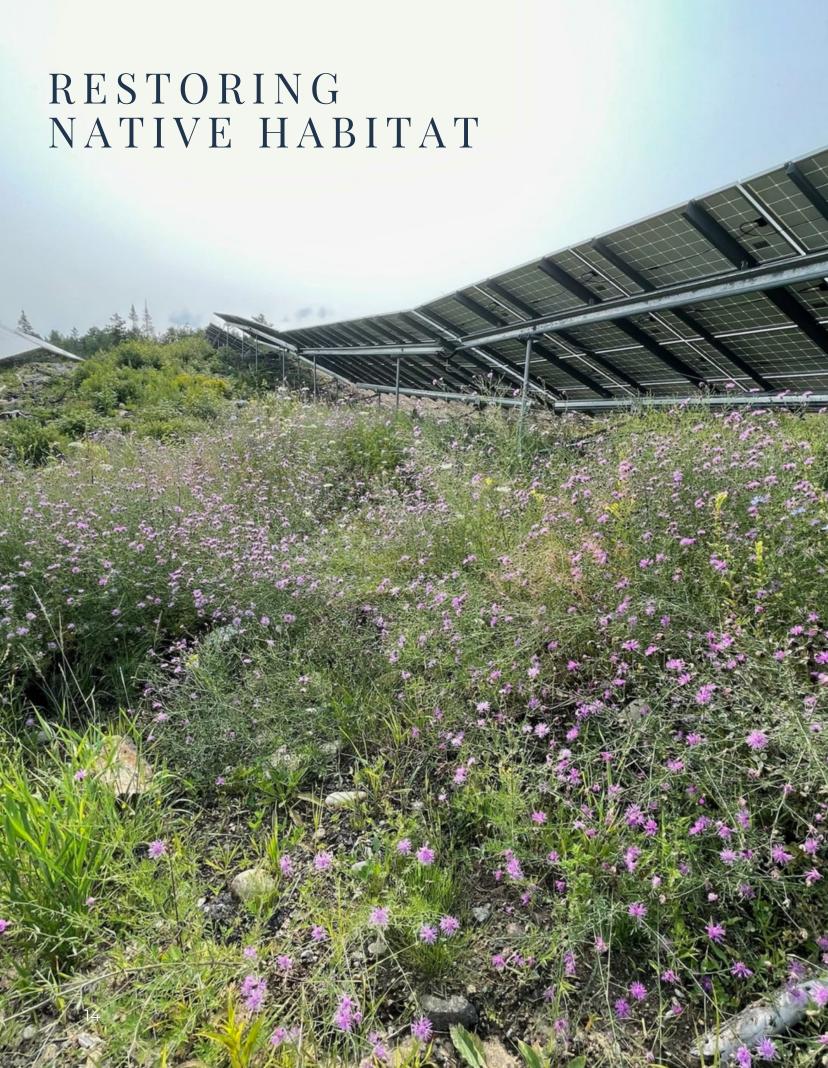
This three-day celebration of arts and artists in late July fanned out across all corners of Keeseville with a grand total of 21 art-related activities. An estimated 500 festival-goers attended one or more of these events, enjoying the work of over



60 artists, actors, musicians, and other creatives. Sixty-eight children and adults helped paint a 90-foot mural on Adirondack Hardware's southern wall, creating an enduring public artwork depicting scenes of "what brings us together" in Keeseville. The plein air painting show and sale sold a record \$26,500 worth of art, all of which was created during the festival by 32 artists.

The Community Arts Festival was a strong success, and will continue to be an invaluable summer arts event and driver of community's revitalization.





Adirondack Pollinator Project

In collaboration with partners at Paul Smith's College, The Wild Center, and the Lake Placid Land Conservancy, the Adirondack Pollinator Project' empowered residents of the Adirondacks to take action in 2021 to ensure a future where pollinators thrive, native habitat abounds, and residents and visitors alike are engaged pollinator advocates.

In June, the Pollinator Project held its largest native plant sale yet, putting over 4,000 native plants in the hands of Adirondack gardeners, many of which replaced lawn space with pollinator habitat.

The project also distributed more than 5,000 native wildflower seed packets at farmers markets and through direct requests from local residents of the North Country.

Three online "Pollinator Happy Hours" were hosted for gardeners interested in learning more about the selection, planting, and care of native plants.

Our Community Garden Assistance
Program received 21 applications for
pollinator gardens and selected 11 for



installation via our Mobile Pollinator
Garden Trailer. A total of 40 pollinator
gardens have been installed by
AdkAction throughout the region to date
– from Plattsburgh in the North, to
Queensbury in the south, and to Old
Forge in the west.



The Mountain Lake PBS 'Pollination Station' is used to educate children about pollinator conservation.

In 2021, we thought creatively about the kinds of emerging spaces and places pollinator habitat can be created.

AdkAction Board Member Chris Cohan was instrumental in working with the Department of Environmental Conservation to plant a pollinator landscape at the Upper Saranac Lake boat launch. Additionally, AdkAction volunteers planted a pollinator-friendly native seed mix around the solar arrays at the new Saranac Lake Community Solar farm.



Broadband For All

The pandemic continued to bring an increased, bipartisan recognition of the crucial nature of broadband for business, health, and education across the country and the Adirondacks. AdkAction's decade of leadership in this area has helped position the North Country to receive significant funding toward our 100% broadband coverage goal.

AdkAction continues to work with municipalities across the region to ensure as many hard-to-reach households as possible are being covered by statewide broadband infrastructure investment programs. In 2021, a major effort in this work was keeping Spectrum accountable with its claims of new hookups connecting residents in remote rural counties to broadband. Research found hookups actually paid for by local residents, many of which did not truly qualify as new. This kind of careful address-by-address fact checking ensures Spectrum meets their state broadband connections mandate, and these efforts result in real value to residents.

AdkAction also hosts a monthly forum with major stakeholders throughout the North Country to discuss the status of Broadband access in our communities,



exchange ideas, best practices, and lessons learned, and share relevant news from Albany, Washington, and broadband providers. The monthly conference call sparked the creation of the North Country Broadband Alliance, a coalition of Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Warren, and Washington counties and providers like Spectrum, Slic, and Hudson Valley Wireless. Together, these parties share information through the Alliance to reach a common goal of 100 @ 100: 100% of the households and businesses in the North Country having access to at least 100 Mbps download speed. In 2021, the Alliance submitted a \$20 million application to provide high-speed broadband service to 3,000 unserved/underserved households through a broadband grant program from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) for the North Country Broadband Deployment Program.



AdkAction's Dave Wolff participated in a regional broadband roundtable



Compost for Good

One of our passions as an organization is community composting's impact on healthy soils and more robust food systems. Here in the Adirondacks our efforts have diverted over 280,000 pounds of food scraps from landfills—creating a valuable product from those "wastes," while preventing almost 38,000 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere.

The Compost for Good project continued to innovate in 2021, creating new community-scale, in-vessel composting designs that are even easier to construct, and more affordable to own and operate. The project also assisted emerging community-scale composting initiatives, and made existing initiatives more effective.

With support from generous regional and federal partners, the Compost for Good team is researching methods for



diverting human urine from conventional wastewater treatment plants to be turned into a high value soil amendment, and demonstrating the economic viability of this process.

Turning organics into a powerful soil amendment can have many benefits, including creating local jobs and the conditions that allow soils to pull carbon from the atmosphere where it can be sequestered for many decades.



the Compost for Good Team of John Culpepper, Katie Culpepper, and Jennifer Perry



Beyond the Peaks Student Film Festival

This community-based showcase supports the development of storytelling and digital literacy for young filmmakers. Named for its reach, the "Beyond the Peaks" festival first took place as a red-carpet event at the Wild Center in Tupper Lake in May 2019.

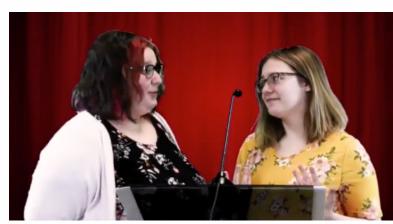
The third annual Festival was intentionally designed to take place on a digital platform, which enabled AdkAction to open submissions to students across all of New York State. The festival prompted students outside the Adirondacks to learn more about the region, and inspired Adirondack students to rededicate themselves and create even more ambitious films for the competition.

The Festival's awards ceremony took place over Zoom in June 2021. Volunteers and Tupper Lake students worked to produce pre-recorded segments for each awards category, which cut to the winning filmmakers for live acceptance speeches. Approximately thirty-six students, teachers, and family members registered to attend the virtual event.



Following the awards show, many attendees stayed on for an informal conversation to share their college and career plans, thoughts about filmmaking, and to meet their fellow student filmmakers.

Given the festival's speciality skill set and growth, the Beyond the Peaks Student Film Festival began the exciting process of moving to a new host organization at the end of the year. Mountain Lake PBS will take this project to the next level by providing more hands-on learning opportunities in filmmaking and television production, and greater exposure for films made by local students. We are so pleased to see this new project host take the director's chair, and to work together to support the continued success of the project.



Tupper Lake Students helped produce the 2021 Festival Awards Show Opposite page: a scene from the overall winning film, 'Ordinary"

Land Bank Incubator Project

In addition to broadband access and food insecurity, another issue the pandemic revealed in the Adirondacks was housing insecurity, rising property costs, and diminishing availability of long term rentals - making it even more challenging to retain and attract working families to our region.





In late 2021, AdkAction began a new project aimed at addressing the shortage of affordable housing in the Adirondacks by taking a lead role in exploring the development of a regional land bank — a potentially vital step to create more attainable housing units for year-round residents of the Adirondacks and contribute to a more sustainable economic future.

Land Banks are entities that exist to strategically acquire, manage, maintain, and repurpose properties in a manner consistent with the communities' values and needs. Land Banks can also purchase properties or accept donated properties and develop them to create more housing units.

Given our park-wide service area and distinct orientation toward collaboration, AdkAction's Land Bank Project is convening a series of regional conversations with community leaders in Essex, Clinton, Franklin, and Warren counties.

Saranac Lake Whitewater Park Project



Based on a \$411,000 Downtown Revitalization Grant awarded by New York State to Saranac Lake, the Saranac Lake Whitewater Park Project reenergized its efforts in 2021 to provide whitewater opportunities accessible to canoes, kayaks, SUPs, and other watercraft on the Saranac River. Whitewater parks have only become popular in river towns where they act as magnets that draw paddlers, anglers, and tourists. The Saranac Lake Whitewater Park will improve the recreational value of the Lake itself and support increased economic activities in downtown Saranac Lake. The Park will feature a single riverwide standing hole or wave that can be played in and around at various river levels throughout the year.

The project team — with Steve Maikowski as new Board lead, former Board member Scott McKim, Tyler Merriam of the Ausable River Association, and Brittany Christenson — completed a Request for Proposal for Design and Permitting of the Whitewater Park, and a company with extensive experience in whitewater park design and construction was identified as a finalist.

With the help of outside legal counsel, AdkAction conducted significant due diligence on the design contract, and persevered through various operational and financial challenges, from increases in the costs of materials, to the search for Whitewater Park operation partners.. Without the staff capacity and experience to manage a major construction project, AdkAction sought out a new sponsor for the Park, with a goal of ensuring that the DRI Whitewater Park grant would stay in Saranac Lake. AdkAction initiated discussions with the Village of Saranac Lake in late 2021 and The Village Board voted in early 2022 to become the new sponsor of the Whitewater Park DRI grant.

Construction on the single feature Whitewater Park is expected to begin in summer 2023 with an anticipated completion date of Fall 2024.

Financials

Thanks to generous support of our community, 2021 brought an increase in AdkAction staff members in order to manage extraordinary growth across our food security efforts, lend added sophistication to our communications and outreach, and expand capacity across all our projects throughout the region.

How Your Support Was Allocated

Total Revenue:

Membership Dues: \$73,041 Individual Giving: \$283,934

Grants: \$198,094

Program Revenues: \$27,779

Total Reserves:

Cash and Savings: \$199,917

Total Expenses:

Projects and Related

Communications: \$309,949

Management, Administration,

and Marketing: \$55,399

Fundraising: \$16,583



A copy of the latest annual filing for AdkAction, Inc. may be obtained, upon request, from the organization (AdkAction, P.O. Box 64, Keeseville, NY 12944) or from the NYS Office of the Attorney General, Records Access Officer, The Capitol, Albany, NY 12224 (www.chartiesnys.com) or at 212-416-8401. You can obtain a description of the programs and activities that your contribution supports by contacting us at the above address.

Thank You

Foundations & Businesses

Adirondack Foundation Adirondack North Country Association Adirondack RiverWalking Amalgamated Charitable Foundation Anne Porter & Associates Auger Lake Property Owners Association Ausable Brewing Company Capital District Physicians Health Plan Chapel Hill Foundation Cloudsplitter Foundation David and Candace Weir Foundation **DND** Properties Essex County Arts Council Field & Fork Network Gigis On The River Haskins Family Foundation The Huth Family Charitable Fund J Hogan Refrigeration & Mechanical The Keith and Nancy Johnson Family Foundation Lake Champlain Basin Program Lake Placid Chamber of Commerce Lake Placid Institute for the Arts & Humanities LivinaADK Loremans' Embroidery, Engraving & Printing Mountain Valley Federal Credit Union





The Pittsburgh Foundation
Pleasant Corner Restaurant
Raquette Lake Preservation Foundation
Stewart's Shops
St John's Episcopal Church
Ticonderoga Natural Food Co-op
Triple Green Jade Farm
Woodmen Life Chapter 1024

This list includes members, donors, sponsors and partners who made contributions between January 1 and December 31, 2021. If you or your business is missing or listed incorrectly, please contact info@adkaction.org

Partners

New York Health Foundation

Northern Power & Light

Paul Smith's College

Philip Street Realty

Adirondack Architectural Heritage
Adirondack Council
Adirondack Foundation
Adirondack Health Institute
Adirondack North Country Association
Ausable River Association
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Essex County
The FUND for Lake George
The Hub on the Hill

Keeseville Pharmacy
Lake Placid Land Conservancy
Paul Smith's College
Paul Smith's College Adirondack
Watershed Institute
Saranac Lake Community Solar
Skills 21 at EdAdvance
Upper Saranac Lake Foundation
The Wild Center
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Annual Meeting August 2021

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Photo Courtesy AdkAction Member Barry Lobdell





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